(SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL) (a) to (d) As per the Advance Estimates released by the Central Statistical "Organisation, the growth rate in real gross domestic product (GDP) at factor cost is estimated at 6.0 per cent for 2000-2001 compared with 6.4 per cent in 1999-2000. The lower growth in 2000-2001 is attributed in particular to lower growth in GDP originating in manufacturing, financial, insurance, real estate & business services and community, social & personal services in 2000-2001 compared with 1999-2000. Growth targets are not fixed annually. However, the GDP growth target for the Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) is fixed at 6.5 per cent per annum on an average. The various economic reform measures undertaken so far are expected to have a favourable impact on the economy. These reform measures cover area of trade, exchange rate, foreign investment, financial sector, industry, infrastructure, taxation, expenditure management etc.

'Jurisdiction of Narcotics Control Bureau'

598. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have studied the Delhi High Court's verdict given sometime in the second week of December, 2000 that the Narcotics Control Bureau set up in 1986 as the apex coordinating agency under the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act has no power to investigate any of the drug-peddling cases booked over the years;

(b) if so, what are the implications involved with regard to the pending and decided cases based on NCB's investigations; and

(c) the manner in which Government propose to solve it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government has filed an appeal alongwith the stay application against the judgement of the Delhi High Court in the Supreme Court of India. The apex court has been pleased to grant stay of the Delhi High Court's judgement. Hence, as on date there is no change in the status of the pending and decided cases, based on

NCB's investigations. The matter being subjudice, no remedial action is proposed to be taken at this stage.

Social upliftment by Private Banking Industry

599. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have urged upon the private banking industry to take up the work of social upliftment in rural areas and the large segments of Indian populace in remote areas; and

(b) what is banks' response in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) According to the guidelines issued by Reserve bank of India (RBI) private banks are also required to observe priority sector lending target of 40 per cent of net bank credit, of which 18 per cent is to be for agriculture and 10 per cent for the weaker sections. These guidelines also stipulate that the new banks in the private sector will also be required to open 25 per cent of their branches in rural and semi-urban areas. As reported by RBI, private-sector banks are by the large able to achieve their priority lending targets, though there are some shortfalls in lending to agriculture and weaker sections.

Assistance to AP

600. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have been requested to provide financial assistance to Andhra Pradesh to enable it to tide over the current financial problems;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government also propose to take some steps to ensure that such financial assistance is invested genuinely in development Programmes by the State Government; and

(d) if sp, the details thereof and by when such assistance is likely to be granted.